

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method to improve a [[the]] sputter deposition process, said method comprising the following steps:

a) providing a vacuum;

b) providing an electrode in said vacuum;

c) providing a substrate in said vacuum, said substrate having no contact with said electrode;

d) providing a device in said vacuum; said device being in relative motion relative to said electrode and being in mechanical contact with said electrode over a contact zone;

wherein the said device removes removing material from said electrode or said device applies applying material to said electrode, said material being in a solid state.

2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said device has a hardness, which is greater than [[,]] or equal to a [[the]] hardness of the electrode or a part thereof in order to remove material from said electrode.

3. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said device has a hardness, which is smaller than [[,]] or equal to a [[the]] hardness of the electrode or a part thereof in order to apply material to said electrode.

4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said electrode is a cathode.

5. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 4, wherein said cathode is a rotatable cylindrical target.

6. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, wherein said electrode is an anode.

7. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 6, wherein said anode is a vacuum chamber wall or shield.

8. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 6, wherein said anode is a rotatable cylindrical tube.

9. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 6, wherein said anode is a rotatable brush.

10. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 4, wherein said electrode target has an end zone that is not sputtered and wherein said contact zone overlaps with said end zone.

11. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 4, wherein said electrode target has a zone of race track return and wherein said contact zone overlaps with said zone of race track return.

12. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 4, wherein said electrode target has an erosion zone and wherein said contact zone overlaps with said erosion zone.

13. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein said electrode target is an ITO target.

14. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said device is intermittently in relative motion relative to said electrode and said device is intermittently in contact with said electrode.

15. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said device is continuously in relative motion relative to said electrode and said device is intermittently in contact with said electrode.

16. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said device is intermittently in relative motion relative to said electrode and said device is continuously in contact with said electrode.

17. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said device is continuously in relative motion relative to said electrode and said device is continuously in contact with said electrode.

18. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein the device is in motion relative to the electrode while the vacuum is maintained and is in mechanical contact with the electrode over the contact zone while the vacuum is maintained.

19. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein the device removes material from the electrode or the device applies material to the electrode while the vacuum is maintained.